CURSE OF THE
SPAWN
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19
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CONTAINS SOME COARSE LANGUAGE
TURNER
WOLF
BAKER

Todd McFarlane & Image Comics presents...

CURSE OF THE SPAWN

Curse the Curse

Dedicated to Tyler Chance Wolf.

STORY ALAN McELROY

PENCILS DWAYNE TURNER

INKS CHANCE WOLF
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Curse of the Spawn #18 Summary

Anthony Twistelli leans on several people to learn who destroyed his businesses and is after him. He learns from his priest brother that the Vatican Secret Police are looking for someone in the Twistelli organization and will stop at nothing until they find him. The VSP is looking for someone who is a member of the ancient and excommunicated order of the Knights of Templar. A man who has been sent to find and convert Spawn–the obsessive religious fanatic called The Curse.

image

TODD McFARLANE PRODUCTIONS

www.spawn.com

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THIS PLACE IS DISGUSTING. I THINK I SMELL MY OWN PEE DOWN HERE.
THESE TUNNELS DATE BACK OVER *TWO HUNDRED YEARS*, MY DEAR ANTONIO. HISTORY IS DESERVING OF *REVERENCE*.
MY LIFE'S BEEN FLUSHED ANYWAY, SO WHAT THE HELL DO I CARE.
ALL THE FALLACY, THE SHEER *HORROR* OF LIFE. WHERE IS THE CHURCH WHEN YOUR PRAYERS NEED *ANSWERING*, eh?
THEY ARE RUTHLESS, *MERCILESS* MEN HIDING, COWERING BEHIND THEIR SAINTLY ROBES! *HYPOCRITES* AND *HERETICS!* *UNKNOWING* OF WHAT TRUE HOLINESS *REALLY* MEANS!
Uh-huh. LOOK, SMILEY, I DON'T GIVE TWO COMMUNION WAFERS ABOUT ALL THAT. YOU SAY YOU GOTTA WAY FOR ME TO SAVE MY OPERATION. SO, WHAT *IS* IT?!

YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT GOOD OR EVIL, *DO* YOU, ANTONIO?
LET'S SEE... BOURBON: GOOD... MAD DOG: EVIL. WHAT ELSE IS THERE EXCEPT POWER AND MONEY.
LEVELS, MY INSIPID FRIEND. LEVELS *WITHIN* LEVELS.
DARKNESS HAS *INNUMERABLE* SHADES, AS DOES *LIGHT*. THE VIVISECTION OF THE SPIRITUAL *UNIVERSE*, THE *AUTOPSYING* OF THE *SOUL*, IS OF *PARAMOUNT* IMPORTANCE.
YEAH, LISTEN, YOU AND YOUR LITTLE GRINNING BUDDIES CAN RUN A MASSAGE PARLOR DOWN HERE FOR ALL I CARE. WHAT'S IN IT FOR *ME* EXCEPT CRUSTY SHOES AND A SKIN-RASH?
MY IMPATIENCE OFTEN GETS THE *BETTER* OF ME. I'VE *CHANGED* SOME SINCE I LAST TANGLED WITH THE PRETERNATURAL. BUT I'M *FAR* FROM DONE WITH MY PLANS FOR USURPMENT OF THE LOWER DEPTHS. YES, THE BLACKNESS *TREMBLES*, THE SHADOWS *CRINGE*.
I'M OUTTA HERE.
DO YOU LIKE *WEAPONS*, MY CRIMINAL CONFEDERATE? MACHINE GUNS, GRENADES, ITEMS STILL BEING *TESTED* BY THE *MILITARY*? I KNOW *I* DO.
I'M LISTENING.
A *GIFT*.
WHAT'S THIS, THE NAME OF YOUR DENTIST?
THE WHEREABOUTS OF A V.S.P. ASSASSIN KNOWN AS *KEENE*. *ENJOY*.

OUGHTA GET A MEDICAL DEGREE AS MANY TIMES AS I'M DOING SURGERY. ALWAYS IN SOME FLEA BAG "NO QUESTIONS" HOTEL.
Ah... SHIT...
EEEGHH... HHHH...
ONCE A KING ALWAYS A KING... BUT ONCE A KNIGHT IS ENOUGH...
MMMHHH...

KRASH
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, VINCENT?! THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR HAVE NO BUSINESS IN THIS CITY. NONE!
YOU WANNA RELAX, COG. YOU'LL GIVE YOURSELF AN ANEURYSM.
LOOK, IT'S REAL SIMPLE, I GOT A 'RED LETTER' FROM THE OLD SCHOOL. I'M SUPPOSED TO FIND AND CONVERT A TEETERING HELL-SPAWN KNOWN IN LIFE AS AL SIMMONS.
ARE YOU INSANE?! THE TIMING IS ALL WRONG!
DEURGES HAS ESCAPED CAPTIVITY, HE'S LOOSE! THAT PUTS TOO MUCH AT RISK, TOO MANY FORCES IN SPIRITUAL FLUX. NO CONVERSION CAN TAKE PLACE NOW WITHOUT INVITING DISASTER!
DO YOU HEAR ME!?!!
I GOT ORDERS. I SWORE A PACT.
AND, SEEIN' AS YOU'RE OUTSIDE THESE DAYS, I GUESS THAT MEANS YOU GOT NO MORE SAY IN WHAT WE DO. DON'T FORGET TO LOCK UP.
FOOLS...

DO NOT CROSS
GRECO... 'NOTHER ONE A TWISTELLI'S CREW. RUNNIN' OUTTA TOE-TAGS FOR THESE MOB JOKERS DOWN AT THE MORGUE.
WHO CARES, THEY'RE SCUM.
KEENE.
NOT THE ONE, SIR?
NO. BUT WE'RE CLOSE.

NEECE... NO, THIS ONE WASN'T THE KNIGHT, BUT THERE ARE LESS THAN A HANDFUL OF TWISTELLI'S MEN LEFT ALIVE.
I'M AT THE BROWNSTONE IN TRIBECA... I HAVE A LEAD ON A YOUNG HITTER NAMED D'EGALLO, FIRST NAME VINCENT...
KICK
WHOOSH
WELCOME BACK.
HERE'S A TAG FOR YOUR CAR.
KUM

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FREE DETAILING WHILE YOU WAIT!
THORA!
AAAAHHHH!
SIT DOWN, BITCH!
BOOM
BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM
WOMEN: ONE SECOND THEY'RE HOT FOR YOU, THE NEXT THEY'RE ALL GONE TO PIECES.
SQUISH!

STAY OUT OF THIS, TWISTELLI. WE DON'T WANT YOU!
BLAM BLAM BLAM
HONK!
Beeep!
WHUM! WHUM!
BARUM!
GET UP.

FINE. BE THAT WAY
KISH
SHUUM!
RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT
YOU THERE! DROP YOUR WEAPONS AND--
NOT NOW. CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY!?!

WELL, THAT WAS FUN. HE WAS RIGHT WHERE YOU SAID.
ONE HAND WASHES THE OTHER. CARE TO PASS THE SOAP?
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A GUY NAMED VINCENT D'EGALLO. HE'S MY BEST... HE MUST BE THE KNIGHT OF WHATEVER... THE ONE YOU WANT
CALL HIM.
VINCENT...
Eh, BOSS, YOU OKAY? YOU HEAR ABOUT GRECO?
YEAH, LISTEN, WHERE ARE YOU?
LOOKING FOR A SNITCH IN AN ALLEY OFF THE BOWERY.
REAL PISS-HOLE THEY CALL *RAT CITY*. I THINK THIS IS WHERE OLD GAS STATION TOILETS GO TO DIE.
OKAY, KEEP YOUR PHONE CLOSE. I'LL GET BACK TO YOU

SEIZE HIM!
chttrk
keeee
CURSE--YOU BASTARD! YOU'RE DEAD-- HEAR ME?!
keeee
chttrr
THE HELL-- GET OFF ME!
chttrr
JAKAKAKA!!!

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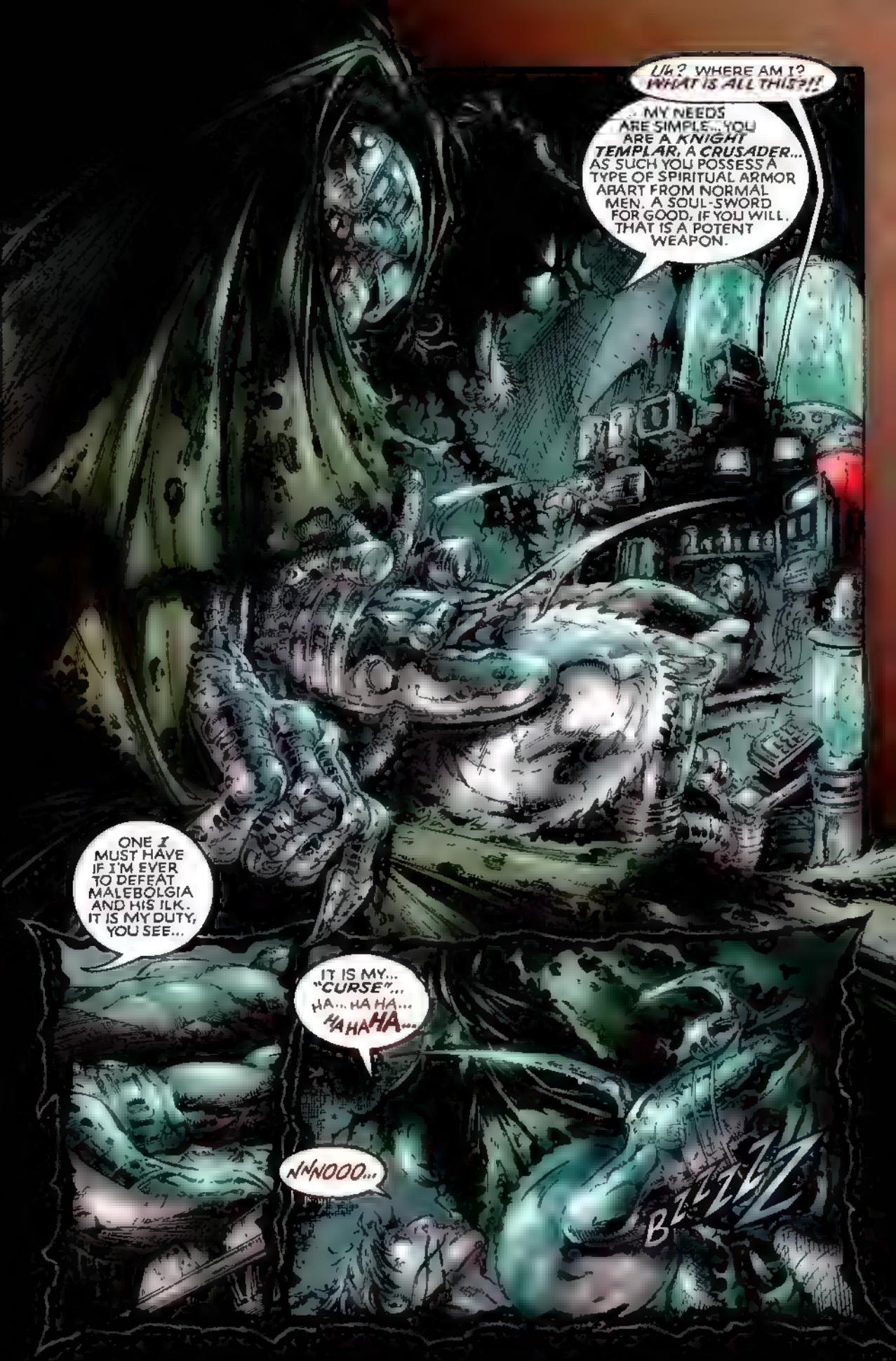
AAAAHHH!
VIOLENCE IS NO ANSWER.
ZZZTTT!
YES, YES, SO MUCH TO DO... SO LITTLE TIME.
SSZZ
PLNK
PLNK
FATE KNOWS NO MERCY...


Uh? WHERE AM I? WHAT IS ALL THIS?!!
... MY NEEDS ARE SIMPLE... YOU ARE A KNIGHT TEMPLAR, A CRUSADER... AS SUCH YOU POSSESS A TYPE OF SPIRITUAL ARMOR APART FROM NORMAL MEN. A SOUL-SWORD FOR GOOD, IF YOU WILL. THAT IS A POTENT WEAPON.
ONE I MUST HAVE IF I'M EVER TO DEFEAT MALEBOLGIA AND HIS ILK. IT IS MY DUTY, YOU SEE...
IT IS MY... "CURSE"... HA... HA HA... HAHAHA...
NNOOO...
BZZZZZ

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THIS WAY.
A CURSE ON HIM WHO IS LAX IN DOING THE LORD'S WORK!
"A CURSE ON HIM WHO KEEPS HIS SWORD FROM BLOOD-SHED."
JEREMIAH 48:10.
PAUL KRAHN, SPIRITUAL ZEALOT.. hmm. HAD AN UN-FAVORABLE ENCOUNTER WITH SANSKER, THE VAMPIRE... OUR MISTER KRAHN IS NOT A HAPPY MAN.

THE OLD PALACE MOVIE THEATER.
HEY, YOU HEARD ANY-THING FROM THE BOSS?
NADA... HE'S PROBABLY DEAD.
EXIT
NOT YET!
BAM!
RUDDY, GET THE FRIGGIN' CAR
WE'RE GOIN' FOR A LITTLE RIDE DOWN BY THE RIVER.

WHERE ARE YOU?! WHERE IS THE SPIRITUAL ARMOR HOUSED?!
BODY, BODY, PARTS, PARTS!
IN THE HEART?
IN THE HEAD?
WHERE'S THE ANSWER?!
I HAVE YOU HOOKED TO THE GOOD BOOK. BUT THE BOOK TELLS ME NOTHING!!
WHERE ARE YOU!?!!
REVEAL YOURSELF TO ME!

KA
BOOM!
LEAVE NOTHING.
Nooo!
BOOOM
BOOMM
"I WILL SCATTER YOU LIKE CHAFF DRIVEN BY THE DESERT WIND, THIS IS YOUR LOT, THE PORTION I HAVE DECREED FOR YOU, BECAUSE YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN ME AND TRUSTED IN FALSE GODS."
-- Jeremiah 13:24-25.

Oh, JEZUSS-- WE'RE GONNA DIE!
WHAT, YOU'VE NEVER GONE NINETY DOWN A SEWER BEFORE?!
THIS IS THE FUN PART!
THAT'S A DEAD END UP AHEAD!
DEAD END, HA-- THAT'S JUST ABOUT RIGHT.
SKKREEEEE
BAM!
KA-RASH!
EVERYBODY DIES!

"THE TIME HAS COME FOR JUDGING THE DEAD ..
"... AND FOR REWARDING YOUR SERVANTS THE PROPHETS AND YOUR SAINTS AND THOSE WHO REVERENCE YOUR NAME, BOTH SMALL AND GREAT...
"... AND FOR DESTROYING THOSE WHO DESTROY THE EARTH."
"DURING THOSE DAYS, MEN WILL SEEK DEATH, BUT WILL NOT FIND IT; THEY WILL LONG TO DIE, BUT DEATH WILL ELUDE THEM."
From the Book of Revelations

"... AND ALL THE BIRDS GORGED THEMSELVES ON THEIR FLESH..."
TWISTELLI. ALIVE. BARELY.
NEECE. WOUNDED OF FLESH... AND SOUL.
VINCENT D'EGALLO... WITH COGLIOSTRO AS HIS ONLY MOURNER.
REST IN PEACE.
THE END.
"THE LAKE OF FIRE IS THE SECOND DEATH. IF ANYONE'S NAME WAS NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE, HE WAS THROWN INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE..."

BlahBlahBlah

BlahBlahBlah 66
w/terry fitzgerald
tdfitz@aol.com

Hey. So, let's talk about everyone's favorite vegetable. .KORN. I was lucky enough to hang out with the guys last Thursday at their recording studio here in LA. They are busy working on their next album which is due out sometime around June. The guys invited me down to listen to a few new tracks and to be a part of their latest live KORN TV extravaganza. For those of you who are unaware of KORN TV, every Thursday at 4:30 PST tune into korntv.com on the web for their hour long Afterschool Special where you can learn about all of the naughty things your mother warned you about, as well as meet cool celebs from the music biz, talk to the band, etc. Let me add however, all material might not be suitable for kids of all ages. Kids, tell your parents to leave the room if they don't understand what's going on! How do the new tracks sound? Killer. No crap. Without giving too much away they've come up with a new sound which compliments the previous two albums, yet takes them one step further into their musical endeavors. Expect to hear some wicked samples, unique instruments that you wouldn't expect to hear on a KORN album and some heavy ass bass. Did I mention Jonathan's patented screams and Munky's riffs? They are there in multitudes as well. All in all I expect this album to blow up when it hits the shelves. As for the pics, top one features Head and Jonathan with myself and the bottom one pictures Munky and the man. Sorry, but the pic with Fred B and I was obscured by his favorite beverage and David wasn't around that afternoon. Be prepared to read more about their upcoming album in future issues. See the ad?

What else is up? Went to the Lost in Space premier two weeks ago. Everyone from the feature was in attendance, including the lovely Ms. Heather Graham. After the flick, which was great by the way, we were all trucked over to the Palladium where we partied the night away. Really enjoyed the LIS Icee machine. I had the chance to hang out with a lot of New Line people who I hadn't seen since working with them on Spawn. Ms. Graham entertained the crowd with her charming conversation and beautiful locks of gold. Some of the effects in the movie are incredible. My fave being the launch of the Jupiter 1 spacecraft which upon exiting Earth's atmosphere blows off its outer shell to reveal a sleeker more advanced looking Jupiter 2 nestled inside. If you haven't seen it, check it out. Soundtrack's killer too. Speaking of movies, Species 2 opens this weekend, (the weekend I write this), and I can't wait to see it. Syl is brought back to life as Eve and there's a great scene where Syl mates with her boyfriend Adam. Let me add that their definition of mating is not at all like yours and mine. .Check out the cool character designs by H.R. Giger himself. The man gives himself nightmares I'm sure. Look for our miniature versions of Giger's work this Fall as part of the Movie Maniacs action figure line from McFarlane Toys.

The toy guys have produced some killer sculpts of both Eve and Adam as well as Freddie and Jason. Gotta run, off to have lunch with a friend in the biz.

best, terry fitzgerald

UPCOMING EVENTS - For more information, check out www.spawn.com

- **LA TIMES FESTIVAL OF BOOKS** L.A., CA UCLA Campus Dickson Plaza, *Friday-Saturday, April 25-26*
- **KISS EXPO** Hackensack, NJ Rothman Center, *Sunday, April 26*
- **PACIFIC COMIC & ANIME CON** Vancouver, B.C. Empire Landmark Hotel, *Saturday-Sunday, May 2-3*
- **WONDERFEST MODEL & TOY EXPO** Louisville, KY Executive West Hotel, *Friday-Sunday, May 8-10*
- **MOTOR CITY CON** Novi, MI Novi Expo Center, *Friday-Sunday, May 15-17*

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Dear Todd

I'm not a new reader per se but I know a few new readers and I asked them how and why they started reading comics in the first place. The answer: cross merchandising. While I prefer comic stores that focus on comics, a lot of them also carry toys, models, T-shirts, and games like Magic:The Gathering, etc. Overwhelmingly, the people I spoke to said they went into a store looking to buy a specific model kit or card deck or whatever and happened to pick up a comic while they were in there. Most seemed to think comics were just kids stuff like Archie, Spidey and the like and were surprised and interested by the more mature content of so many comics available today. One kid said he went into a store with his friend who was looking for a model kit and while his friend perused the models he got hooked reading a Books of Magic. Another kid said he bought a Spawn toy after seeing the movie and that led him to seek out the comic book. Yet another said he was looking for a Magic card deck and bought Kingdom Come instead. Of course, now he expects all comics to have art that matches Alex Ross.

A couple of older readers claimed they started because they saw enough articles or review in mags like Spin, Details, Axcess, etcetera and thought they would check out this cool "new' art form. Usually they read comics like Love & Rockets (RIP), Sandman (RIP), or House of Secrets.

Anyway people searching out some other item and tripping over a comic book seems to be the way most new readers are coming in. The problem with that is, these happy accidents are too few and far between to bring in readers en masse. Thus, there are few good answers to what ails the industry to be learned here.

Still, I think Hart Fisher had some good ideas. I'm just surprised you printed them after what he said about Wizard in The Comics Journal.

I would like to see more trade paperbacks in libraries. I also think that there should be a unified front between DC, Image, Dark Horse and Diamond (forget Marvel) that leads to more print advertising in mainstream magazines, some national TV advertising campaign and some effort to educate the general public about the potential of the medium.

Also when a movie like Spawn or Batman or any comic book-based theatrical release comes out, why isn't there a trailer of some sort that simply promotes the comic book? Why didn't Todd put a two-minute trailer about Spawn comics (or better yet, comics in general!) in front of the Spawn movie? Why not put something on the video release? Quit being ashamed of the source material and tell the world that comics are just as valid a medium as prose or cinema.

Sincerely,
Robert Young
Isle of Palms, South Carolina

Although I agree with you in theory, what you propose is not nearly as easily accomplished as you just stated. Merely telling somebody something exists does not mean that they will then go out and buy it but more importantly if they do, we have to present it in a fashion that is to the liking of the public. You have to create not only a good product but a place where people feel compelled to shop. Unfortunately, I don't feel that is true of the vast majority of the comic shops.

So to spend millions of dollars on something that is located in an environment that you normally wouldn't go into doesn't solve the problem much. In a weird way it would make more sense to advertise and sell comics at the local department stores so that the message is out in front of the public. We have to create and get beyond the stereotype of what comics are if we ever hope to convince others that what we do is worth their time. Again, if we go back to some of the arguments I've been trying to make in the last few letters columns, the answers to most of our problems is not dependent on one specific group but more with the mutual goal of everyone wanting to promote comics successfully.

Dear Todd

In response to your letter, I would have to say the problem with attracting younger readers is you. Not just you but in the industry there seems to be a lot of creators that incorporate very adult themes into their work. That may be okay with the adults but that is certainly not going to be okay with parents. There are a lot more alternatives for kids to do that don't involve comics, that parents will get their children into to keep them away from the trash they see blatantly posted all over comic shops' walls.

I don't think there should be any toleration in comics for nude variants, lesbian characters or major profanity. Comics, for the most part, have become what their creators want them to be instead of how they should be. In my opinion, Todd McFarlane should be one of the last people to show any concern for the welfare of the industry; he helped bring forward comic books' new Image.

Andy Gill

I would say that I disagree with your assertion and most of society's which is a knee jerk reaction when you hear the word comic book. To you comic books are for kids, period. It's the same things I run up against in the real world all the time. It's the sort of mentality that comics are a pure entertainment form that will always keep comics in the dark ages. I see comic books as being real books and movies but there should be a wide breadth to the kinds of ideas that should be presented rather than targeting just one segment of society like the youth. Comic books are a form of entertainment for anybody and I don't believe that thinking exists. Your stated opinion just reiterates the general mind set that comics are only for children. Comic books, instead of reaching their full potential out in the real world, have always been held down because we've allowed it. Until we can get by the existing stereotype, it will be very hard for us to move forward. The bigger question is when

we've tried to do children's comics in the past, why they haven't succeeded and the answer goes beyond "if we make it, they will buy it."

We've lost some of the insight on how to market our products, so why drain the people. Now we're paying the consequences

Dear Mr McFarlane

I am writing this letter to you to thank you for what you do. It is great in this day and age to see someone keep their integrity and stick to your guns. It is also nice to see someone that is so proud of their family and being a great family man. I met you at a signing in Plymouth, Michigan at a Whalers game and when I met you, you took the time to talk to me when I asked a question. Thank you for not being an egocentric jerk that thinks he is better than everyone. I had you sign my Spawn #10 at the picture of your daughter Cyan because I said it was great to see someone so proud. Right then you said "This is my best creation." Right there I gained a higher respect for you. It is great to see someone held in such high regard by so many that has his priorities straight and doesn't think of himself as a god.

Well, I just wanted to let you and your family know that in your and their honor, my first child, a little girl, who was born on November 2, 1997 at 2:56 PM, was named Cyan Marie Cook. I hope you don't take this as an insult or anything but my wife and I are big fans and we fell in love with the name. After the Plymouth signing when you pulled out your wallet to show me a picture of your family, I saw how proud you were and that struck me good and will always stay with me. Thank you!

I know people get mad at you for not penciling anymore but I think it is great to see a man who keeps time for his family especially with everything else that is happening in your life right now. Thank you for being who you are and what you do.

PS Gretzky rules!

Thanks

Tim Cook, Age 24

Proud father in Michigan

There's not really much I can comment on in the nice letter. Once you become somewhat successful, the perception that you give to different people at different times can vary dramatically. In this case, your experience was a good one which is far more important to me than some of my business dealings. It may have had a different ending. I hope you and your family are doing well.

Dear Greg and Todd,

I am amazed. Recently I was able to buy Spawn issues 1-61, Curse of the Spawn issues 1-8, Angela, Violator and all of the other mini-series Spawn tie-ins. I have only been collecting Image comics since Spawn 62 came out, but I greatly enjoy all of them. I just finished reading Spawn 32. That comic book is astounding. It was some of the best fun I've had in a long time. Great job on that book, guys.

Greg, my question to you is how well did The Creech sell in comparison to the Angela and Violator mini-series that you worked on? How well did it sell in comparison to the issues of Spawn that came out around the same time? I was just curious to see how it stacked up sales wise.

Also, I was wondering why Greg wasn't a choice for favorite penciler in the back of Curse of the Spawn 16. Why wasn't The Creech a choice for favorite mini-series? Why were neither of you put in for the favorite writer category? I filled your names in and wrote in The Creech under the "other" boxes. You guys should not have been choices that I had to write in. Dwayne Turner, Danny Miki and Alan McElroy should also have been included. Do you have an idea as to why Wizard didn't put them in there? Thank you for all of the wonderful work.

Sincerely,

Nate Nease, Frisco, Colorado

Ultimately the voting of most awards is a bit of a popularity contest and the people you enjoy most can't always win. I also believe that a lot of these contests have become skewed because of certain agendas that everyone is desperate to meet in these desperate times. With the slow growth of the comics community the reasons why we do what we do has become somewhat tainted. As the deterioration of sales continues so too does the broad-minded thinking. Now what does all this have to do with voting for your favorite artist and writer and inker? Someday when I have the time to write a 25 page essay, I'll let you know what I'm talking about.

Dear Mr McFarlane

In response to your letter in "Magic Words" in Wizard #77, there are many reasons why people begin and continue reading certain comics- familiar artists, great artwork, plots thicker than tracing paper, a little reality and mostly exposure through friends. I never would have started reading Spawn if it wasn't for my friend. I kept buying them for the killer artwork and the great stories. I like the way that the Spawn comic does all kinds of things that no one expects like when Simmons got his face back for a day or however long. But it always manages to bring up issues not only of the super natural kind but society's like drug problems, violence, gangs, domestic violence and racism.

By the by, where I live the only local place to buy comics was a drug store but that has been bought out and they no longer keep comics in stock. This truly sucks! Is there a way that I could order back issues of Spawn without having to shell out ten bucks a comic every month to get that issue? I wrote to the address on the inside cover of an issue of Spawn asking the same thing but I never received a response.

Sincerely,

William D. Clifton III

Hampton, South Carolina

This question comes up quite often. Let me see if I can explain it to you. The way it works is we have a central comic book distributor. We provide the distributor with descriptions and art for our books about four months in advance. They compile a large catalog listing of all the comics and comic related merchandise from each publisher and distribute it to all of the comic retailers. The comic store retailer looks through the catalog and chooses the books and items he feels he can sell to his customers. The retailer places his order with our distributor who compiles all the orders and passes along the information to us. We can then determine how many books to print or items to produce. After the book is produced it is shipped to our distributor's central location. They divide and distribute the comics to a regional distribution center who then divides the comics and ships them to the comic shop retailer. The retailer then places them on the shelf and sells them to you.

While it may seem more convenient for you to receive the comic in your mailbox, it wouldn't be cost affective or very efficient for us. Overall, it would drive the cost of the comics up because we would end up either overprinting or underprinting the comics not to mention the labor-intensive packaging and shipping of each individual comic book.

I can offer a suggestion that if you can't find a comic shop to use the Comic Shop Locator Service by dialing toll free 1-888-ComicBook. They can direct you to your nearest comic shop. Also some comic shop retailers offer a subscription service through their shop. If you don't live near any comic shops, you should be able to find some sort of comic subscription service offered over the internet by retailers advertising on the net.

I hope that answers the subscription question for you as well as many others who have asked that question. Thanks for being a comic book reader!

スポーン ENDCAP 71

SPAWN II

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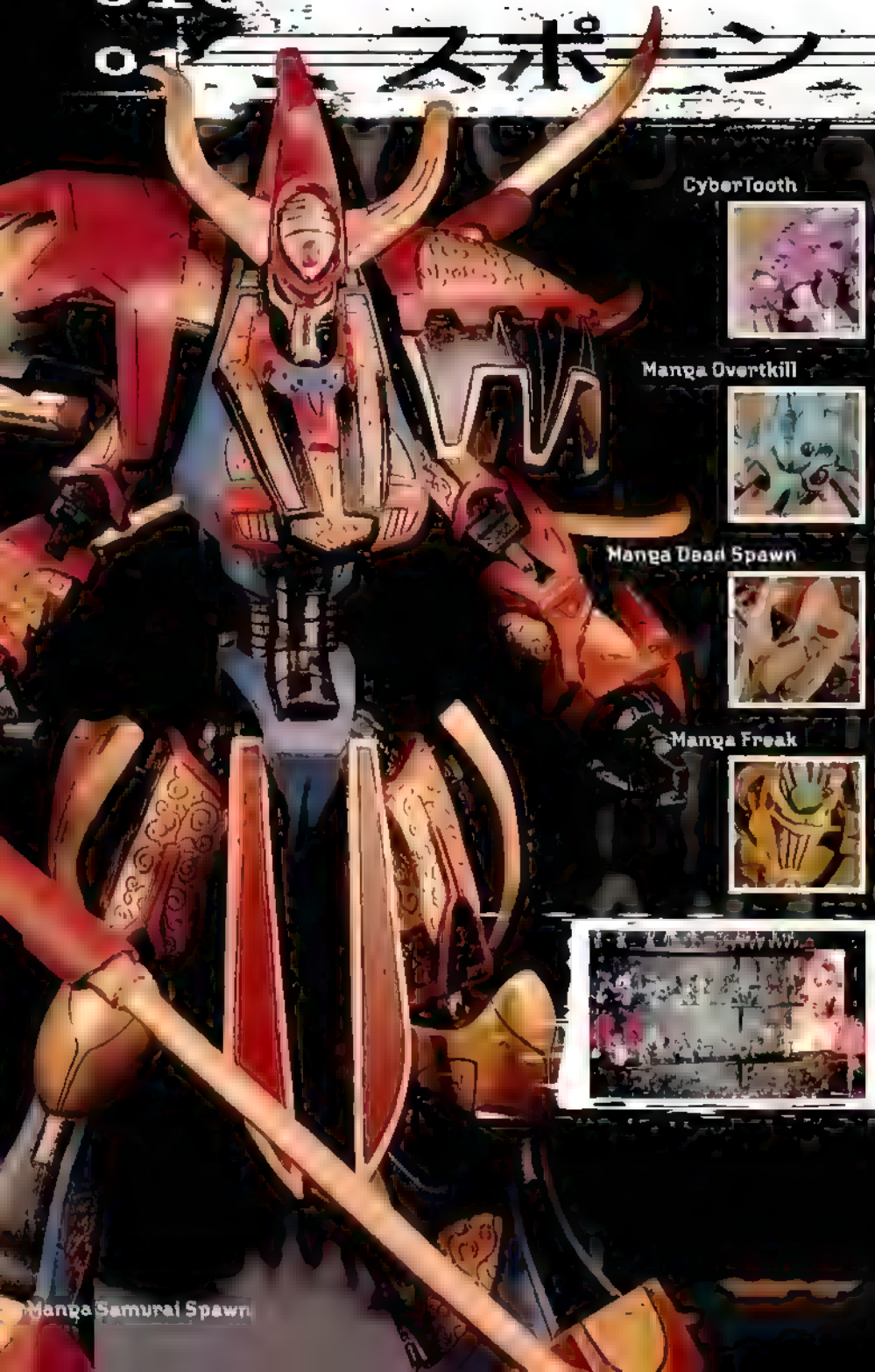


CyberTooth

Manga Overtkill

Manga Dead Spawn

Manga Freak

Coming off the successful Manga One series that debuted last November, these six figures are hot. Based in an alternate reality, they have the Japanese manga feel with all the detail that only McFarlane Toys can offer.

Manga Samurai Spawn is a warrior of the sacred House of Fujiwara. A very detailed figure, he features intricately carved scrollwork on his symbiote armor. By combining his spiked backpack with his laser lance and shield you get an EXTRA figure, the mosquito-like cyber insect.

The *Manga Dead Spawn* is a cybernetic version of our previous Zombie Spawn. With a chain saw and sword, he hacks through any demons or robots that attack him. He also has a backpack arsenal full of blades and weapons.

CyberTooth is a true creature of fury. The figure can stand on two feet AND crouch on all fours and has jointed claws. This streamlined wildcat has a bendable tail and 14 points of articulation for maximum posability.

Another figure in the assortment is the *Manga Cyber Violator*. This is a TOTALLY robotic Violator with every inch of his body a lethal weapon as can be seen by the amount of blood and gore glistening on his blades.

The final villain in the assortment is the *Manga Overtkill*. This deadly combatant can attack in two ways: while his left fist fires like a rocket from his arm the other hand shoots a stream of liquid.

The ultimate in articulation is the depraved *Manga Freak*. His six arms have EIGHTEEN joints! He wields pincers, a scissors claw, a buzz saw and even a slam whip. In total, this character has 23 points of articulation making it the most articulated figure we've ever done!

Alongside the Manga Two series are the repaints of the Manga One figures. Manga Spawn is now dark and light gray. Manga Ninja Spawn is black, silver and gold. Goddess is black with purple armor and gold wings and Manga Curse has the half-helmet and is a metallic maroon. Also be on the lookout for the repainted Manga Violator (with topaz wings) whose Japanese writing now says "Make My Day."

Now on to the letters:

Zenia Lopez from San Francisco California wrote asking quite a few questions. Why did the Tiffanys have stripes on the cards, when the other series didn't? Was the Tiffany the Amazon in teal and silver an exclusive like the Green Cosmic Angela? Where can someone get the 13" Angela? Thanks for the letter and sketches, Zenia. All the Series 6 figures switched to a striped card early in the production run. It was decided that it helped to make the figure stand out better from the lightning background. The Tiffany you have is the repaint, which wasn't an exclusive. It just came out after the one in maroon and gold. There IS an exclusive version of Tiffany the Amazon coming out through the toy club. It is being offered in the current flyer. Speaking of the McFarlane Toys Collector's Club, they also are offering the 13" Angela, Spawn, Violator and Medieval Spawn in a few weeks. If you aren't already on the mailing list and would like a copy of the new flyer, simply send a postcard or write to: McFarlane Toys Collector's Club, PO Box 701545, Plymouth MI 48170-0966. Be sure to include your full name and address.

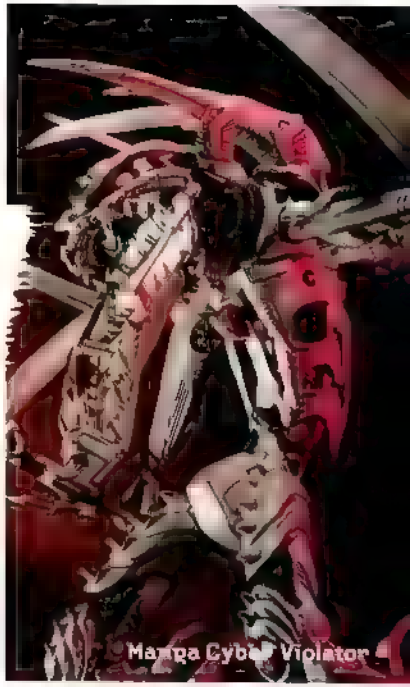
Kris Kessel of Fort Gratiot Michigan wrote in asking about whether there are any plans for us to produce Greg Capullo's Creech in action figure form. Yes. Look for the genetically engineered soldier to be available in the fall as part of our Series 12 assortment. Also look closely in upcoming issues of Spawn for another new character from the comic to appear, immortalized in plastic, in that same assortment.

Alexander Sunawan of Jakarta Indonesia e-mailed us asking why we put the new head for Spawn #50 on a Spawn I body and not the Spawn III figure which he likes better. At the time Spawn #50 came out, Spawn III wasn't even MADE yet and we wanted the Diamond Exclusives to be variations of figures that were no longer in production. Spawn III was still shipping as of just a few months ago.

Javier Wong from Lima Peru sent a message on the internet asking who decides which figures are made. That's an easy answer. McFarlane Toys are all McFarlane's toys: Todd picks the figures, decides on colors and has the final say on everything. After all, McFarlane Toys IS his company.

We also got some e-mail from Adam Wilson from Loughborough Great Britain who had some lively verses about upcoming figures and Michael Humphrey from Mexico who included a computer art file with his message. Darius Potts from Chandler Arizona even dropped a line after meeting Al Simmons at a local store. Thanks for all the kind words.

The award-winning letter for this month had to be John T. Smith's of Concord North Carolina. He only had a short message: "I will not tire you with a flowery letter proclaiming my love for McFarlane Toys. These photos speak for themselves." As you can see, he really is a fan collecting not only the opened toys, but POGs, magazines, keychains, costumes, videos...Heck, he's got it all and now he also has a Limited Edition Green Cosmic Angela for Letter of the Month!



Back On HBO®

TODD MCFARLANE'S Spawn

We're back this month with another look at the upcoming second season of Todd McFarlane's Spawn on HBO. We camped out at a recent recording session and spoke with a few of the actors that bring the Spawn characters to life, as well as the writer of episode 2.17.

Rebekah Bradford, the Story Editor for much of season two, also wrote the episode being recorded the day of our visit. Rebekah has worked with John Leekley, the show's Executive Producer, for the last couple of years and has collaborated with him on many projects. We asked her about the creative process behind the ideas and storytelling, as well as Todd's input and influence with the series.

"One of the things that John and I do really well together is building a story from a concept and an idea. When we came to work for HBO and took on Spawn, I submerged myself in research. I read all the comic books and got into the whole mysticism and world that Todd had created. We also sat down with Todd for hours and hours of taped conversations, listening to his philosophies dealing with Spawn and all the characters. It gave us some wonderful insight. Building off that, as Todd once said, "You take a nugget from what I've created in the comic book series, and you go with it." That's what John and I try to do. We start with a concept and whether it's something that Todd's blurted out, something that John's blurted out or I've blurted out, we take that idea and develop what John likes to call the 'tent poles' of the story and we build beyond that. What is the drama of the story? What is driving these characters? What are the blood and guts of the story? It's sort of like piecing together and building a monster–but a good monster. While putting together the story, it's like you hear a voice and the story takes on a life of it's own and the characters emerge."

"The characters are the life force of the whole show. When John and I talk about finding a voice for a character, we go to the back issues of the comic books to learn about these characters. What type of lives do they lead? What type of things do they tell their kids? What type of shows do they sit and watch when they go home? We did this for Twitch and Sam. We did a lot of soul searching for them because we wanted to make them very three dimensional characters, not cartoonish and we didn't want to make them stereotypical cops. We wanted them to emerge as these three lovable characters that you really invest in emotionally. In the ending scene of 'Twitch is Down,' Twitch is shot and Sam, his partner, is yelling into his walkie talkie to get an ambulance. It's gut wrenching. It's like you're watching NYPD Blue and it fades to black and you're wondering, 'Is he going to live or is he going to die?' The process is really wonderful and exciting."

"All through that process, you have more taped conversations and phone calls with Todd. You keep going to where the heart of the philosophy and the belief is. What drives this character, Spawn? What is he all about? What is he thinking? What are some of the things he's feeling? That's another thing that was really wonderful about the comic book series. It's about the wonderful ironies of life and taking it down to that simple level. Like Todd said, 'Nothing is black and white. There's gray area in there. It's not good. It's not evil and what you think is good may be evil, and what you think is evil may be good. There's a little bit of hell in heaven and a little bit of heaven in hell.' It's great, because it turns everything on its end and makes you look at things from a different perspective and you discover things aren't what they seem. During my research, I did a lot of reading about different religions and mysticisms, the devil and good vs. evil over centuries. It's the oldest drama there is, the most intriguing and the most faceted. There are so many different possibilities and stories that can

Midnight May 15th

TODD MCFARLANE'S

Spawn

Season II

Keith David (Spawn/Al Simmons)

Richard Dysart (Cogliostro)

Robert Forster
(Major Forsberg)

come out of that one theme; it creates a very eerie kind of world that is non-predictable and that is what good drama is all about. With good drama, the audience can't predict the story and doesn't know what's coming next."

We had a few questions for the actors behind the voices of your favorite characters, along with a special guest voice for episode 2.11. Here are a few of the responses:

Q: Please tell us some of your previous credits.

Keith David (Spawn/Al Simmons): "I was the voice of Goliath on Gargoyles. I do one of the voices on Hercules, the character Apollo, on both the series and in the movie. I've also done some voices in other animated venues, guest spots mostly, on things like Aladdin and Fantastic Four. I do countless voice-overs, a lot of National Geographics and Discovery Channel. I am playing Tiger Woods' father in an upcoming movie called The Tiger Woods Story and will be in Armageddon, to be released soon. I'm also a singer and have been working on my club act, trying to get some CD's done. My greatest desire in life is to play Nat King Cole."

Richard Dysart (Cogliostro): "L.A. Law was the only television series I have done. I'm very proud of several of the films I've been in. My favorite is Being There, with Peter Sellers, directed by Hal Ashby. I haven't seen it in years, but people tell me it holds up very well. Pale Rider with Clint Eastwood was a joy, playing the bad man to his good man was a lot of fun. When I started doing L.A. Law, I didn't have the time to do many features. I did do Wall Street for Oliver Stone and Back to the Future Part III. My early career was on the stage in New York from about 1957 until I left to come to Los Angeles and do a movie in 1973. On stage, I was in the original Broadway cast of the Pulitzer Prize winning play, That Championship Season. I guess you could say I've worked here and there and everywhere."

Robert Forster (guest voice–Major Forsberg): "Jackie Brown, of course, is my most recent release. Before that, I did a picture called American Perfekt with a very hip young English writer/director, Paul Chart, which will be released later this year. I was in a pretty good low budget feature by the name of Peacemaker, about two aliens who come to earth, one's a serial killer and the other guy is the peacemaker. The beauty of the picture is that you don't know which one's which 'til the end of the film. You, the audience, keep assuming, incorrectly, that it is one and then the other. So you don't know until the end of the picture which one is which. Going back quite a ways, I was captain of the ship in Disney's The Black Hole and did Alligator, now a bit of a classic, in the late seventies."

Q: Were you familiar with Spawn before you accepted this part?

David: "Yes. One of my best friends has a comic book store so I was very familiar with Spawn. I have another friend who is just a comic buff and he has first issues of many comics, including Spawn."

Forster: "I was not familiar with Spawn except that I'd seen flashes of it. I am a big fan of animation, however and now that I've become acquainted with Spawn, I can't wait to see these shows. When I was a kid I was a terrific fan of comic books but there was a point at which I stopped reading comic books and started going to movies. My mother used to tell me I would grow up to be an usher in a show, I loved movies so much. So I went from comic books to movies and now back to comic books. I know people who follow Spawn religiously. I have an old friend in NY, a mathematician and an inventor of games, who gave me the lowdown when I told him I was doing an episode for the series. He and his 7-year old like the show quite well."

Q: Why did you decide to accept this role?

David: "I'm really drawn to great writing and I love the character. Plus, the nature of the character interests me greatly because I used to want to be a minister and so I'm very interested in anything that relates to, or talks about, that struggle that we as human beings have with spirit, the struggle between good and evil, should and shouldn't, would and wouldn't. Spawn is a classic example of that. Also, I love Richard Dysart. I worked with him on my very first movie and we got to be friends then, but here we get to play directly with each other and off each other. And he is a wonderful, wonderful actor and a great person."

Dysart: "I accepted this role for a number of reasons. The first is that I was being offered a lot of material having to do with guest-starring on television and I didn't want to do that. At the same time, I wanted to be active. I like the idea of going to work and coming home at the end of the day with a sense of having accomplished something. That's primarily the reason. I wanted something to fill my time, where once a week I could sit down and do some homework on a part and it's all vocal; I didn't have to get all dressed up. Another reason is when I told our son about the possibility of doing this, he practically did a somersault, an emotional somersault, saying, 'You've got to do it, you've got to do it.' He told me what it was and how it's respected, admired and read by so many people around the country. I figured I'd give it a try. Finally, I do a lot of work around the country in defense of the First Amendment to the Constitution, free speech. When I read the script I thought, 'A lot of people aren't going to like this language. A lot of people aren't going to like this violence.' Well I don't particularly care for good language or bad language one way or another. I also have counter ideas in regards to violence. But because some people have gone to such an extent of categorizing everything that anybody might watch with an A or a B or a YES or a NO with this complicated, unworkable system of codes that are just stupid, I thought, here's an opportunity, if it were ever to come about, to defend the work on the basis of the First Amendment. In short, you don't have to watch it - you can turn it off. You don't have to go scout it out. It's on at a time, Friday night at midnight on HBO, where kids who you may not want to watch it should be in bed. We cannot pattern our lives, our work and our thoughts on a program of 'not allowed to watch' or 'allowed to watch,' it's pure censorship. Everybody can watch and make up their own mind about things. As far as youngsters watching the program, that's up to their folks. If they're not out at 11:00 p.m. or midnight on a Friday night, they should be tucking the little kids into bed. For so many years, people have allowed television to be the babysitter and now when television exhibits mature growth, there are a lot of people who just cannot stand it. And that's just too damn bad."

Q: Does this compare to anything you've done before?

Dysart: "There's no comparison at all. When we were watching that scene earlier, I'd come out of the bright Los Angeles sunlight into this little room where they're playing this episode and I was caught right up in it. It's so much larger than life and so beautifully animated with light and the absence of light, that's what makes the difference. It's almost too much that the human voice should even interfere with it. It does allow the voice to be dramatic. It's a very powerful series and an unusual assignment and I'm lucky to have it."

Forster: "Well, it all compares in that you're trying hard to deliver meaning. What's the meaning of the material, that's what the actor's job is. The actor's job is to figure out what the meaning is and deliver it so that the audience doesn't have to figure out what the meaning is. The audience can just take it in easily and understand from what the voice is doing, as well as the picture. And to deliver that meaning in some natural way."

Q: What do you try to bring to your character?

David: "Life. I try to bring a sense of reality. But I think that's also in the writing, so I just try to illuminate the writing as I would if I were physically playing Spawn, if I were walking in his shoes in the role. Which, in fact, I would like to do one day. If they ever do a live-action feature again, I would like to get a chance to play Spawn."

Forster: "An actor brings who he is and something about what he has made himself into as a human being. Now it doesn't always work that way. I think of myself--if you can picture a diamond ring on your finger with all the facets all the way around it, the facet that's looking right at me, that's who I am. And if the part doesn't call for anything more than that, that's the one you bring. But if you've got to be a bad guy, you can find that guy in you, the one that really doesn't care anything about you and would rather hurt you than not. If I had made myself into that guy, it's hard to get away with that in real life, but in movies and in fiction you can look for that character and express it. Or a funny guy, or a dopey guy, or what have you. So to an extent, you have to put yourself in that situation and refuse to feel uncomfortable or self-conscious about it and just go with the material. So that's what the actor does. He tries to bring himself, if it calls for that, and to be as unselfconscious as he can and just go in there and do the circumstances that character finds himself in."

Q: How does voice acting differ from traditional acting?

David: "It's just a different genre. The difference is that I'm not walking around. I'm in the studio talking to a mike and the mike is my audience as opposed to having people in the theater. I could say I don't involve my whole body but actually when I'm sitting or standing there in the booth, I do. It's a funny thing to watch actors in the booth reading their lines because they're very animated and they get very physical. Especially, like when you're about to get hit, I don't hit myself in the stomach but I let my body react as if I had, as if I were playing it. The difference is that little area of playing space between you and the mike as opposed to between you and the first row."

Dysart: Well, the voice is an instrument, a human instrument. It can be musical, as an opera singer, it can be scat, it can be lyrical--it can be everything. And when in juxtaposition with other voices, there's a magic there. In films it's the image, the visual, the actor is concerned about. The voice also, but you just don't think about what your voice is going to sound like when you're making a movie or you would be all tied up and you wouldn't be honest to yourself or to the material. Here you can zero in, come right in on it, even when there's a question you can get the drift of things as I did today. I had that one line in the middle there and I knew that the scene depended on that line. So you find out about that, you interpret that. It's a form of artistic interpretation and it's a lot of fun.

Q: What's your favorite episode from Season One? Season Two?

David: "My favorite episode was the one where I saved Cyan from the bad guys. When her mother asks who saved her, Cyan says, 'The sad man.' That was so touching to me."

Dysart: "I don't have any favorites from season one. For season two, I'll have to see the episodes before I can pick a favorite. I'm just very glad we don't have to lip sync a lot of things. We have the freedom to go first and then the animators come in and make us look good---make us sound good."

There's more next month from the cast of Spawn. We'll hear from Dominique Jennings (Wanda Blake), John Rafter Lee (Jason Wynn), Victor Love (Terry Fitzgerald) and Michael Nicolosi (Clown). Todd McFarlane's Spawn returns to HBO on May 15.

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TODD McFARLANE'S

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SERIES II

EPN 6058

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